

AEOA's Mandatory COVID-19 Vaccination Policy

AEOA Staff and Board Members:

The Agency is deeply focused on keeping our employees, clients, and customers safe while working at our facilities and supporting our organization. As we continue to navigate this new normal, we have worked with our Leadership, Human Resources, Safety, Information Technology, and Legal teams to develop this policy. While it is not a policy that all may agree with, it clearly identifies agency requirements, based on guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), Federal OSHA standards and program funding guidelines related to COVID-19. Policy updates may occur as the pandemic and corresponding guidance continue to evolve. Departments may have specific policies or more restrictive guidelines based on the funding source regulations.

Establishing a workplace where employees feel comfortable performing their jobs safely and incorporating regulatory guidelines is a multi-faceted challenge. By implementing this policy, we can help contribute to a safe working environment as everyone adapts to operating protocols in today's still challenging conditions.

Stay Safe,

Scott Zahorik Executive Director
Jeff Kletscher, Board Chair

Created: 12/03/2021

Revised: 07/12/2022 Page 7, Section COVID-19 Testing & Added COVID-19 Testing Report From

Revised: 10/17/2022 Page 2, Face Masks

SUMMARY OF THE POLICY:

COVID-19 Vaccination policy mandate- All employees are covered by this policy and must be vaccinated by Jan. 31, 2022, as a condition of employment.

Accommodations- Medical and religious accommodations (such as exemptions from mandatory vaccination) will be considered consistent with the ADA and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act. In order to ensure request for accommodation can be considered, please submit the request 30 days in advance, failure to do so may result in a delayed response and be subject to unpaid leave until the decision is made.

Face Masks-Update- Effective October 17, 2022, while mask wearing is no longer mandated, AEOA continues to recommend mask wearing. Regardless of county-level data, staff may choose to continue wearing masks, and we should respect and support those choices. In addition, the CDC guidance recommends that individuals who are immuno-compromised or at a high risk for severe disease should talk to their healthcare provider about whether masks or other precautions are warranted. Staff with symptoms, a positive test, or exposure to someone with COVID-19 should wear a mask for preventive measures and to minimize the potential spread of the virus. The CDC recommends action you can take to help you protect yourself and others from severe impacts of COVID-19.

Timelines:

January 3, 2022 - final date of first dose of the two series Moderna COVID-19 vaccination.

January 10, 2022 - final date for the first dose of the two series Pfizer COVID-19 vaccination.

January 31, 2022 - final date for second dose of two series vaccination (Moderna and Pfizer) or one-shot dose (J & J) vaccination.

Jan. 31, 2022- Policy compliance & implementation effective date. Date to submit required proof of vaccination status to HR.

Purpose:

Vaccination is a vital tool to reduce the presence and severity of COVID-19 cases in the workplace, in communities, and in the nation. AEOA has adopted this policy on mandatory vaccination to safeguard the health of our employees and their families; our customers and visitors; and the community at large from the hazard of infectious diseases, such as COVID-19, that may be reduced by vaccinations. This policy will comply with all applicable laws and is based on guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and local health authorities, as applicable.

Scope:

This Mandatory COVID-19 Vaccination Policy applies to all employees of AEOA. All employees covered by this policy are required to be fully vaccinated as a term and condition of employment at AEOA. Employees are considered fully vaccinated two weeks after completing primary vaccination with a COVID-19 vaccine, with, if applicable, at least the minimum recommended interval between doses. For example, this includes two weeks after a second dose in a two-dose series, such as the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, two weeks after a single-dose vaccine, such as the Johnson & Johnson vaccine, or two weeks after the second dose of any combination of two doses of different COVID-19 vaccines as part of one primary vaccination series. All employees are required to report their vaccination status and to provide proof of vaccination. Employees must provide truthful and accurate information about their COVID-19 vaccination status, and, if applicable, their testing results. Employees not in compliance with this policy will be subject to discipline up to and including termination of employment.

Accommodations:

*Employees may request an exception from this mandatory vaccination policy if the vaccine is medically contraindicated for them or medical necessity requires a delay in vaccination. Employees also may be legally entitled to a reasonable accommodation if they cannot be vaccinated and/or wear a face covering (as otherwise required by this policy) because of a disability, or if the provisions in this policy for vaccination, and/or testing for COVID-19, and/or wearing a face covering conflict with a sincerely held religious belief, practice, or observance. Requests for exceptions and reasonable accommodations must be initiated by the employee by completing the designated form to begin the interactive accommodation process. All such requests will be handled in the order received and our ability to honor requests may be limited. The requests will be considered in a consistent and confidential manner in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, and agency policies and procedures. Contact the HR Department with questions on how to access forms to begin the interactive process. **To ensure request for accommodation can be considered, please submit the request 30 days in advance, failure to do so may result in a delayed response and be subject to unpaid leave until the decision is made.***

Procedures:

Overview and General Information

In order to comply with the agency policy, all AEOA employees must be vaccinated no later than January 31, 2022.

To be vaccinated by January 31, 2022, an employee must:

- Obtain the first dose of a two-dose vaccine no later than January 3 or 10, 2022 depending on the vaccine type and the second dose no later than January 31, 2022; or*
- Obtain one dose of a single dose vaccine no later than January 31, 2022.*

Employees will be considered fully vaccinated two weeks after receiving the requisite number of doses of a COVID-19 vaccine. An employee will be considered partially vaccinated if they have received only one dose of a two-dose vaccine.

Employees may schedule their vaccination appointments, e.g., through an on-site clinic, through their own medical provider, or with a mass-vaccination clinic. Human Resources will be maintaining this policy, and provide any other general information employees need that is not addressed in the sections below.

Vaccination Status and Acceptable Forms of Proof of Vaccination

All vaccinated employees are required to provide proof of COVID-19 vaccination, regardless of where they received vaccination. Proof of vaccination status can be submitted via email to the HR Director or in-person at the HR office.

Acceptable proof of vaccination status is:

- 1. The record of immunization from a healthcare provider or pharmacy;*
- 2. A copy of the COVID-19 Vaccination Record Card;*
- 3. A copy of medical records documenting the vaccination;*
- 4. A copy of immunization records from a public health, state, or tribal immunization information system; or*
- 5. A copy of any other official documentation that contains the type of vaccine administered, date(s) of administration, and the name of the healthcare professional(s) or clinic site(s) administering the vaccine(s).*

The documentation for employees who are fully vaccinated, employees who are partially vaccinated, and employees who have not yet been vaccinated must be submitted to the Human Resources Department.

All employees must inform AEOA of their vaccination status. The following table outlines the requirements for submitting vaccination status documentation.

<i>Vaccination Status</i>	<i>Instructions</i>	<i>Deadline</i>
<i>Employees who are fully vaccinated.</i>	<i>Submit proof of vaccination that indicates full vaccination.</i>	<i>January 31, 2022</i>
<i>Employees who are partially vaccinated (i.e., one dose of a two dose vaccine series).</i>	<i>Submit proof of vaccination that indicates when the first dose of vaccination was received, followed by proof of the second dose when it is obtained.</i>	<i>January 31, 2022</i>
<i>Employees who have not yet been vaccinated.</i>	<i>Submit statement that you are unvaccinated.</i>	<i>January 31, 2022</i>

Supporting COVID-19 Vaccination

An employee may take up to four hours of duty time per dose to travel to the vaccination site, receive a vaccination, and return to work. This would mean a maximum of eight hours of duty time for employees receiving two doses. If this occurs during work hours, the time off for the vaccination must be coordinated in advance and approved by the supervisor. If an employee spends less time getting the vaccine, only the necessary amount of duty time will be granted. Employees who take longer than four hours to get the vaccine must seek prior approval from their supervisor with a reason for the additional time (e.g., they may need to travel long distances to get the vaccine). Any additional time requested may be granted, if reasonable, but will not be paid; in that situation, the employee can elect to use accrued leave to cover the additional time. If an employee is vaccinated outside of their approved duty time they will not be compensated.

Employees may utilize up to two workdays of paid leave immediately following each dose if they have side effects from the COVID-19 vaccination that prevent them from working. Employees who have no PTO leave will be granted up to two days of additional paid leave immediately following each dose if necessary.

The following procedures apply for requesting and granting duty time to obtain the COVID-19 vaccine or paid leave to recover from side effects:

An employee should obtain necessary approvals for time off to get the vaccine or side effects from the vaccination, from their supervisor by submitting requests for time off to seek approval for the time off. In the Request Comment, enter a reason, i.e., side effects from the COVID vaccination.

Employee Notification of COVID-19 and Removal from the Workplace

AEOA will require employees to promptly notify Human Resources when they have tested positive for COVID-19 or have been diagnosed with COVID-19 by a licensed healthcare provider.

Employees will adhere to the Return-to-Work Plan by communicating with the employer if they are sick or experiencing symptoms while at home or at work. Employees who are experiencing symptoms should not report to work. They are directed to contact their supervisor and complete the COVID-19 incident report (located on the agency website, employee portal, COVID-19 resources section).

AEOA will adhere to any applicable leave policies (e.g., PTO leave, Family Medical Leave Act, other policies) that we may implement for employees who test positive for or are diagnosed with COVID-19.

Medical Removal from the Workplace

AEOA has also implemented a policy for keeping COVID-19 positive employees from the workplace in certain circumstances. AEOA will immediately remove an employee from the workplace if they have received a positive COVID-19 test or have been diagnosed with COVID-19 by a licensed healthcare provider (i.e., immediately send them home or to seek medical care, as appropriate).

AEOA's policies for removing employees from the workplace are referenced in the Return-to-Work Plan.

Return to Work Criteria

For any employee removed because they are COVID-19 positive, AEOA will keep them removed from the workplace until the employee meets the return to work criteria in CDC's "Isolation Guidance"; or receives a recommendation to return to work from a licensed healthcare provider.

Under CDC's "Isolation Guidance," asymptomatic employees may return to work once 10 days have passed since the positive test, and symptomatic employees may return to work after all the following are true:

- *At least 10 days (may be up to 14 days for some programs depending on guidance) have passed since symptoms first appeared, and*
- *At least 72 hours have passed with no fever without fever-reducing medication, and Other symptoms of COVID-19 are improving (loss of taste and smell may persist for weeks or months and need not delay the end of isolation).*

If an employee has severe COVID-19 or an immune disease, AEOA will follow the guidance of a licensed healthcare provider regarding return to work. AEOA's policies for employees returning to work following removal from the workplace are outlined in the Return-to-Work Plan.

New Hires:

All new employees are required to comply with the vaccination requirements outlined in this policy as a condition of employment. Potential candidates for employment will be notified of the requirements of this policy prior to the start of employment.

New employees must comply with this policy, including any deadlines for receiving vaccination.

Confidentiality and Privacy:

All medical information collected from individuals, including vaccination information, test results, and any other information obtained as a result of testing, will be treated in accordance with applicable laws and policies on confidentiality and privacy.

THIS SECTION APPLIES TO EMPLOYEES COVERED UNDER THE POLICY BUT ARE NOT FULLY VACCINATED DUE TO AN APPROVED EXEMPTION.

COVID-19 Testing

If an employee covered by this policy is not fully vaccinated (e.g., if they are granted an exception from the mandatory vaccination requirement because the vaccine is contraindicated for them), the employee will be required to comply with this policy for testing. Testing must be FDA approved or authorized, including to detect current COVID virus (e.g., a viral test). The test can be conducted by a third party (processed by a lab) or observed by an authorized third-party provider or the employee may self-administer and submit their own results to HR.*

Self-administering your own test will require using the COVID-19 Testing Report Form.

***FDA Approved At-Home COVID-19 tests:**

<https://www.fda.gov/medical-devices/coronavirus-covid-19-and-medical-devices/home-otc-covid-19-diagnostic-tests>

Employees who report to the workplace at least once every seven days:

(A) must be tested for COVID-19 at least once every seven days; and

(B) must provide documentation of the most recent COVID-19 test result to HR no later than the seventh day following the date on which the employee last provided a test result.

Any employee who does not report to the workplace during a period of seven or more days (e.g., if they were teleworking for two weeks prior to reporting to the workplace):

(A) must be tested for COVID-19 within seven days prior to returning to the workplace; and

(B) must provide documentation of that test result to HR upon prior return to the workplace.

If an employee does not provide documentation of a COVID-19 test result as required by this policy, they will be removed from the workplace until they provide a test result. Until such results have been received, the employee must seek approval from their supervisor for time off or approved telecommute if applicable.

Employees who have received a positive COVID-19 test or have been diagnosed with COVID-19 by a licensed healthcare provider, are not required to undergo COVID-19 testing for 90 days following the date of their positive test or diagnosis. The employee will be responsible for staying in communication with their supervisor and coordinating the 90-day timeline with the HR Department.

Link to locate testing locations: [Find Testing Locations in Minnesota / COVID-19 Updates and Information - State of Minnesota \(mn.gov\)](#). Free COVID-19 testing is available, however, where free testing is not an option, AEOA will cover the reasonable cost of employee testing provided as an approved reasonable accommodation. Employees must work with HR to discuss the best testing option depending on the frequency of the necessary testing, test result turnaround times, and potential costs.

Face Coverings

If an employee covered by this policy is not fully vaccinated (e.g., if they are granted an exception from the mandatory vaccination requirement because the vaccine is contraindicated for them), AEOA will require the employee to wear a face covering. Face coverings must: (i) completely cover the nose and

mouth; (ii) be made with two or more layers of a breathable fabric that is tightly woven (i.e., fabrics that do not let light pass through when held up to a light source); (iii) be secured to the head with ties, ear loops, or elastic bands that go behind the head. If gaiters are worn, they should have two layers of fabric or be folded to make two layers; (iv) fit snugly over the nose, mouth, and chin with no large gaps on the outside of the face; and (v) be a solid piece of material without slits, exhalation valves, visible holes, punctures, or other openings. Acceptable face coverings include clear face coverings or cloth face coverings with a clear plastic panel that, despite the non-cloth material allowing light to pass through, otherwise meet these criteria and which may be used to facilitate communication with people who are deaf or hard-of-hearing or others who need to see a speaker's mouth or facial expressions to understand speech or sign language respectively.

Employees who are not fully vaccinated must wear face coverings over the nose and mouth when indoors and when occupying a vehicle with another person for work purposes. Policies and procedures for face coverings will be implemented, in accordance with provisions required by program guidelines and applicable rules, as part of a multi-layered infection control approach for unvaccinated workers.

Employees can obtain face coverings (e.g., purchased by employer or self-provided) and instructions about when and how they should be worn or used as noted in the Return-to-Work Plan.

The following are exceptions to AEOA's requirements for face coverings for staff not fully vaccinated with an approved exemption but subject to the policy:

1. When an employee is alone in a room with floor to ceiling walls and a closed door. Note that this does not include a cubicle with walls that do not extend fully to the ceiling.
2. For a limited time, while an employee is eating or drinking at the workplace or for identification purposes in compliance with safety and security requirements.
3. When an employee is wearing a respirator.

Questions:

Please direct any questions regarding this policy to the Human Resources Department.

The following information is available to employees for reference and guidance:

Links:

[COVID-19 Vaccination and Testing ETS \(osha.gov\)](https://www.osha.gov/covid-19/vaccination-testing-ets)

[Information for Employees on Penalties for False Statements and Records \(osha.gov\)](https://www.osha.gov/covid-19/penalties-false-statements-records)

[Workers' Rights under the COVID-19 Vaccination and Testing ETS \(osha.gov\)](https://www.osha.gov/covid-19/workers-rights)

[Key Things to Know About COVID-19 Vaccines \(cdc.gov\)](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/imz/iqa/qa190435/)

[1904.35 - Employee involvement. | Occupational Safety and Health Administration \(osha.gov\)](https://www.osha.gov/covid-19/190435-employee-involvement)

Decision Tree: Programs follow the MDH & CDC guidelines and Decision Tree for People in Schools, Youth Program and Child Care Programs.

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AEOA COVID-19 Mandatory Vaccination Policy

As staff are required to review the attached policy. Once successfully completed, the acknowledgment form will become a part of your personnel file.

All staff have been assigned a personal AEOA email account. Accounts are set up using your first and last name. For example: jane.doe@aeoa.org. It is your responsibility to check your AEOA email account on a regular basis.

Please complete the policy review & acknowledgment as part of the new hire orientations. If you have trouble viewing the attachment in the plan, please contact your supervisor.

What is required of you:

All AEOA staff are required to review the attached policy regarding the COVID-19 mandatory vaccination.

After reviewing the policy, complete the AEOA acknowledgement link/form. The form link is below. Please note: You must use your full 6-digit employee number when completing the form.

Provide requested vaccination documentation to the HR Department.

AEOA acknowledgement form link:

<https://forms.aeoa.org/Forms/S0dD8>

Once you complete and electronically submit the AEOA acknowledgment form, that form will become a part of your personnel file.

If you have questions or seek additional information:

Because of the complexity of questions that may arise and the unique individual situations, you are asked to email your questions to your supervisor. If you still have additional questions, please contact the HR department for assistance.